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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KISL](#) [OFDP](#) [PINR](#) [SOCI](#) [IZ](#) [KU](#)
IRAQ-KUWAIT RELATIONS
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE PLANS TRIP TO IRAQ

REF: 05 STATE 5130

Classified By: DCM Matt Tueller for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary. Kuwait's Ambassador-designate to Iraq Ali Al-Mumin cited reciprocity issues as the most important stumbling block to upgraded diplomatic representation in Baghdad. He noted that issues involving security, site location and transportation between Iraq and Kuwait needed to be resolved prior to opening an Embassy. Al-Mumin said that he plans to travel to Iraq soon and intends to meet with Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki, Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani, and other Iraqi and USG officials. He also sought improved support from U.S. military forces in Iraq for Kuwait's humanitarian relief efforts there. End summary.

¶2. (C) Poloffs met September 13 with Kuwait Ambassador-designate to Iraq and head of the Humanitarian Operations Center Kuwait (HOC) retired General Ali Al-Mumin on September 13. Al-Mumin plans to visit Iraq, probably soon after the end of Ramadan (Oct. 24), and has requested USG assistance with transportation and logistics. Al-Mumin plans to travel to Najaf and Karbala in connection with HOC relief projects, including a GOK-funded housing project in Najaf for widows and orphans that would be administered by Iraq's Shia Waqf. Mumin intends to meet with Ayatollah Sistani and Sistani's son in Najaf, then proceed to Baghdad where he has requested meetings with PM Maliki and other Iraqi and U.S. officials.

¶3. (C) Al-Mumin said there are a number of issues blocking further progress on an Iraq-Kuwait exchange of Ambassadors, but made clear his view that the most significant of these is reciprocity. "If Iraq would name an Ambassador, maybe this would clear the way," he said. Senior Kuwaiti officials have taken a similar line in past conversations (reftel). Al-Mumin said security issues are important as well. He said he was realistic about the danger, but noted that "I am a soldier and willing to take risks." Al-Mumin cited several requirements including ensuring adequate security for the embassy and staff, close proximity to the U.S. Embassy and availability of U.S. military transportation between Iraq and Kuwait. Al-Mumin indicated that though it was important for Kuwait to "show its face" he didn't envision being resident in Iraq full-time. Note: In a separate conversation with the Ambassador September 13, MFA U/S Mohammed al-Roumi stressed security concerns as the key factor impeding the sending of an Ambassador to Baghdad.

¶4. (C) PolChief encouraged Al-Mumin to consider ways to strengthen Kuwait-Iraq ties, including the possibility of upgrading diplomatic relations, and noted that Jordan's Ambassador had recently presented his credentials in Baghdad. PolChief stressed the importance of regional support for the GOI, a point on which al-Mumin agreed. PolChief offered

assistance in coordinating al-Mumin's upcoming visit to Iraq.

15. (C) Al-Mumin also sought Embassy help with improving the level of transportation and other assistance provided by the U.S. military for the HOC's relief efforts in Iraq. He complained that assistance was readily available in the past but that now it is much more difficult to arrange, with lengthy delays in obtaining transportation from Baghdad to other parts of Iraq. He said the HOC remains ready to help U.S. efforts in Iraq but that consistent U.S. support is necessary. Al-Mumin was careful to avoid directly criticizing the GOK for its declining support, but when pressed did state that the HOC's facilities in Kuwait (currently scattered over several locations) contribute to its problems.
LeBaron